

SS SCS SB 768 -- MISSOURI COMMISSION ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

SPONSOR: Rupp (Scharnhorst)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Health Care Policy by a vote of 7 to 0.

This substitute defines "autism spectrum disorders" to include autism, pervasive developmental disorder, Asperger's syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, and Rett's syndrome and establishes the Missouri Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders within the Department of Mental Health to advise and make recommendations regarding all levels of autism spectrum disorder services.

The substitute requires the commission to:

- (1) Study and report on the means for developing a comprehensive, coordinated statewide delivery system and ensure that resources are created, well-utilized, and appropriately spread across the state;
- (2) Conduct a needs assessment for coordinated, enhanced, and targeted special education capabilities within each region of the state;
- (3) Develop a recommendation for enlisting appropriate universities and colleges to develop certification or degree programs for students specializing in autism spectrum disorder intervention;
- (4) Make recommendations for developing a comprehensive statewide plan for an integrated system of training, treatment, and services for individuals of all ages with autism spectrum disorders;
- (5) Meet at least four times annually including at least two times before December 31 of the first year the commission is fully established; and
- (6) Report its preliminary findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by July 1, 2009.

The substitute establishes the Office of Autism Services in the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities within the Department of Mental Health to provide leadership in program development for children and adults with autism spectrum disorders including program standards and the coordination of program capacity.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of \$181,683 in FY 2009, \$221,095 in FY 2010, and \$227,726 in FY 2011. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is a result of the work of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Autism, and the Department of Mental Health is excited about the creation of the commission.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Rupp; and Department of Mental Health.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.